

Remarks

The non-final Office Action dated April 22, 2004 has been received and its contents carefully noted. The following comments are offered on the cited prior art and it is trusted that they will be persuasive in bringing about a favorable reconsideration and allowance of the existing claims.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants note the Examiner has initialed the Information Disclosure Statement Applicants' Form PTO-1449 as having considered the references disclosed therein.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-22 are pending in this application and of these, claims 1-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being completely shown by Miyagawa et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,594,619. As set forth, claims 1 and 12 are independent claims and the remaining claims depend directly or indirectly from claims 1 and 12. To reject Applicants' claim under 35 U.S.C. §102, the Examiner must show that each and every element of Applicants' claim is disclosed in the Miyagawa U.S. Patent No. 5,594,619. (MPEP 2131) Applicants respectfully submit that the Miyagawa reference does not include all the claim elements of Applicants' invention as set forth in independent claims 1 and 12 and therefore, respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection.

Applicants' invention as disclosed and claimed provides a novel hinge cover mechanism for electronic devices of the type having a folding case made of at least two casing parts for

example, notebook computers, mobile telephones, personal digital assistance, gaming devices and other such similar devices wherein the casing parts are pivoted joined with a hinge mechanism (page 8, line 31 to page 9, line 17).

Applicants' hinge cover mechanism as disclosed and claimed in independent claims 1 and 12, provides a hinge cover component (30). The hinge cover component (30) includes at least a first pivot element (36) which is pivotally attached to the top casing part (10) to allow movement of the top casing part (10) about pivot axis (C_2). The hinge cover component (30) includes a second pivot element (35) which is pivotally attached to the bottom casing part (20) to allow movement of the hinge cover component (30) about the pivot axis (C_3). The second pivot element (35) is also in sliding cooperation with a groove element (25) in the bottom casing part (20) to allow linear movement of the hinge cover component (30) with respect to the bottom casing part (20) (page 10, line 13 to page 11, line 22) .

Applicants' hinge cover component (30) also provides protection for a flexible printed circuit (FPC) (50) which connects electrical components in the top casing part (10) and the bottom casing part (20) by allowing free movement of the FPC as the top casing part (10) pivots with respect to the hinge cover component (30) and the bottom casing part (20) and as the hinge cover component (30) pivots and moves linearly with respect to the bottom casing part (20) (page 17, lines 1-25).

Applicants also draw to the Examiner's attention that the hinge cover component (30) is attached to the bottom casing part (20) by both the groove element (25) and the pivot (35) while the hinge cover component (30) is attached to the top casing part (10) only by the pivot element (36).

Accordingly, Applicants' hinge cover mechanism as disclosed and claimed requires a top casing part (10), a bottom casing part (20) and a hinge cover component (30) wherein the hinge cover component (30) and top casing part (10) move linearly with respect to the bottom casing part (20) and wherein the top casing part (10) pivots relative to the hinge cover component (30) and the combination of the top casing part (10) and the hinge cover component (30) pivot relative to the bottom casing part (20). The unique arrangement of Applicants' hinge cover component (30) with the top casing part (10) and bottom casing part (20) allows a complex movement of these parts for example, as shown in Figs. 1c-1e, Figs. 2a-2b and as explained at least at page 11, line 15 to page 14, line 14.

The Miyagawa U.S. Patent No. 5,594,619 relied upon by the Examiner discloses and claims a device having an upper cover (25) and a main body case (29) pivotally joined by a hinge unit (37) comprising a first hinge unit (35) attached to the upper cover (25) and a second hinge unit (38) attached to the main body case (29) (column 7, line 1-11). The main body case (29) also includes a hinge rail (39) such that the second hinge unit (38) can move in the hinge rail (39) when the hinge unlock switch (70) is released. It should be noted that the upper case (25) rotates 180 degrees with respect to the main body case (29) such that the upper cover face is either inwardly appearing toward main body case (29) or outwardly appearing with respect to the main body case (29). The complex movement afforded by Applicants' hinge cover mechanism is not taught, shown or disclosed by the Miyagawa reference nor would one skilled in the art be motivated to modify Miyagawa to replicate Applicants' invention.

The Examiner alleges in paragraph 2, page 2 of the Office Action that the Miyagawa upper cover (25) is the hinge cover component (30) of Applicants' invention and that the upper cover (25) is also equivalent to the first casing part (20) of Applicants' invention. Applicants'

respectfully traverse the Examiner's conclusion that the upper cover (25) of Miyagawa can be both the hinge cover component (30) and the first casing part (20) of Applicants' invention.

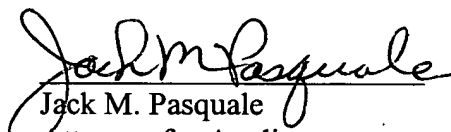
In contrast, Applicants' invention as disclosed and claimed in independent claims 1 and 12 recites the claim elements including the hinge cover component (30), the first casing part (10) and the second casing part (20). Applicants respectfully submit that the Miyagawa reference is deficient with at least lacking to disclose the hinge cover component (30) that has a complex movement including both linear movement and rotational movement as defined in independent claims 1 and 12 of Applicants' application.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims of the application are allowable and early favorable action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney if any questions remain following review of this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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